

ACT ICT

Making Decisions, Taking Action

DRAFT



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For Immediate Release

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ACT ICT to Gather Citizen Input Groups Urged to Schedule Meetings

The City of Wichita is launching ACT ICT, a process that provides an opportunity for any group in the community to host a meeting where individuals will provide input into the community's future.

During these community engagement meetings, which can run an hour or less, a facilitator will take the group through a process where each person will provide his or her vision of the community, assign priorities to the issues facing the community, and give input to preferred methods of funding.

"We encourage all groups to schedule a meeting," said Mayor Carl Brewer. "Our community, like many others, has limited resources and we will be making decisions that will affect us for generations to come."

"We also know that people are busy and it's challenging to have discussions about public funding that are representative of our diverse community, so we often hear just from a few people. We're eager to hear from a wide range of citizens and excited that we have a format that will work for busy people."

The City of Wichita worked with the Hugo Wall School of Urban and Public Affairs at Wichita State University to develop a presentation, feedback system and facilitators to respond to group requests. Meetings will be available through the end of the year. The Hugo Wall School will then provide a report on the collective input to the community, elected officials and community leaders.

To schedule a meeting, please contact:

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When asked what types of organizations he hopes ACT ICT hears from, Mayor Brewer said: "We hope that wherever people gather that those folks give us a call. Think about all the different groups you're part of – faith groups, neighborhoods, employees, non-profits, associations, labor, professional organizations, service clubs. We want to hear from as many people in the community as possible."



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Page 2

ACT ICT is the final phase of a year-long, community engagement process championed by Mayor Brewer, The Wichita City Council and other local leaders. The process asks residents to help set priorities for the future. The first phase was conducted by the Hugo Wall School at the end of 2012 as it used focus groups to explore issues facing the community. Information from the focus groups was then used to help structure the second phase – a survey sent to thousands of community residents to gather wider citizen input on priorities and the issues.

The survey showed respondents are interested in the future of the community, with 98 percent agreeing with the statement that “our community should strive to balance the needs and concerns of future generations,” while seven out of 10 responded that they were willing to put community interests above personal interests.

During the community engagement meetings, residents will discuss their vision for the community and provide input about a variety of community issues including jobs, water, sewer and storm-water infrastructure, streets and highways, parks and recreation, public transportation, and downtown Wichita. The issues were included in the community survey, and have been discussed in several public meetings, the news media and in the business community.

“We will be encouraging our members to take advantage of this opportunity to provide a business perspective on priorities for the future,” said Gary Plummer, President and CEO of the Wichita Metro Chamber of Commerce. “Our members are small, medium and large businesses that care about the community’s future economy so we’ll be scheduling some meetings plus getting the word out to our members on how to schedule meetings.”

Vice President of Wichita Independent Neighbors (WIN) Beverly Domitrovic said: “WIN is for initiatives that better our neighborhoods and I encourage neighborhood associations to provide their input through this meeting process. We think it’s important for all neighborhood residents to have their voices heard.”

Residents may schedule meetings any time including weekdays, evenings and weekends.

“We’ve really worked to keep the background on the issues very brief so the time for input is the focus of the meetings,” said Wichita City Manager Robert Layton. “The Mayor and City Council are eager to hear from as many voices in the community as possible as they continue to make decisions that will shape this community.”

